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**Conference Report: Canadian Alliance of Student Associations' Policy and Strategy
Conference, July 23-27, 2018**

What is CASA's Policy and Strategy Conference?

Policy and Strategy is CASA's longest working conference of the year. It gives us the ability to convene with our committees and to be able to decide on our work plans for the year to come. This year, it was held in Vancouver, British Columbia on the beautiful (yet hard to navigate) University of British Columbia campus.

July 23, 2018

After flying into Vancouver and getting settled into the dorms, our only scheduled activity was a social activity. Bonding over pizza and games, this allowed us to better get to know each other. We also climbed down the infamous stairs at Wreck Beach, and my legs still haven't forgiven me.

July 24, 2018

Today was our first official conference day. After the conference was opened by a First Nations Elder, we broke into groups to discuss CASA's Code of Conduct and priorities. Each group was assigned a member of the Board of Directors, who facilitated the discussions. We made sure that we were all aware of the Code of Conduct policy, and with whom we could get in contact if an issue were to arise during a conference. Next, we talked about our priorities; my group talked mainly about Canada Student Aid. We talked about different issues we've seen with the program, barriers for students, and ways in which we could ask the federal government to make it more accessible. This was a very good, fruitful discussion. After this, we switched priorities and applied the "principles, concerns, resolutions" method to Indigenous education. This means that we conversed about what is important to CASA, concerns with implementation of these goals, and how we could possibly solve them. Our conversation on this was also very in-depth, and we discussed a lot of key issues on our campuses and within CASA. After breaking for lunch, the Board presented their individual work plans for their portfolios. It was great to hear about what will be going on within each respective committee. Next, we participated in consultation for the Prime Minister's Youth Council. We talked about wording of the youth policy and gave our feedback on it. After this, we were done for the day and had the rest of the evening to wander around Vancouver.

July 25, 2018

This was an exciting day as we were able to split into our committees to decide which tasks we would undertake for the coming year. At Foundations, I was elected to the

Governance and Internal Review Committee. This committee has about six members, and our job is to ensure that CASA's governance policies are sound and that members are adhering to them. I have some really cool work coming up, including restructuring the policy committees, as well as working on an observer policy for student associations who may want to join CASA. We worked on these work plans for the entire day. I am very happy with where the actions that our committee is deciding to pursue, and I look forward to getting to work.

July 26, 2018

After all of our committee work the day before, the chairs of each committee presented their work plans to the membership. This was a great way to familiarize ourselves with what CASA was working on as a whole. It also gave us potential points of collaboration between committees. These presentations were followed by an activity during which each member association marked down all of our events from September until November. Not only is this a good way to keep CASA staff apprised of our campus work, but it was also a way for me to see our calendar laid out. I'm very excited for the events and campaigns we have coming down the pipeline! Then, our treasurer Will presented the audited financial statements for CASA, as well as a budget update. This was our last presentation before a quick break for lunch, and then we had our closing plenary. Plenary is where we vote on business, such as the ratification of all of our work plans and accepting the audit results. We also had the opportunity to vote for the location of our Annual General Meeting in March 2019. St. Mary's University Students' Association was the winner, and so we'll be heading off to Halifax for what will be our last CASA conference of the year! For the rest of the night, we had free time and ventured into Vancouver, as well as participated in the infamous CASA-oke. I ended up pulling an all-nighter as I had a ridiculous flight time the next morning. It was a great conference, and I'm excited for our next conference in November.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Very Best,

Laura Bryan
President